

# Peace Corps Jordan



## Pre-Departure Arabic Language Materials

Pre-departure Arabic language materials for Jordan contain 10 lessons, grammar notes, cultural notes, and language learning tips.

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The text accompanies the following 10 audio tracks:

- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_1.mp3 (Time: 8:38) (File Size: 7.90 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_2.mp3 (Time: 3:4) (File Size: 2.52 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_3.mp3 (Time: 1:51) (File Size: 1.27 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_4.mp3 (Time: 2:57) (File Size: 2.03 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_5.mp3 (Time: 1:28) (File Size: 1.01 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_6.mp3 (Time: 2:31) (File Size: 1.73 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_7.mp3 (Time: 1:39) (File Size: 1.14 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_8.mp3 (Time: 2:01) (File Size: 1.38 MB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_9.mp3 (Time: 1:08) (File Size: 804 KB)
- JO\_Arabic\_Language\_Lesson\_10.mp3 (Time: 1:27) (File Size: 1.00 MB)

## **WELCOME!**

This manual is a brief presentation of the spoken Arabic language and some cultural behaviors in Jordan. With the help of the enclosed interactive language digital audio files, you will be able to hear and pronounce the sounds of Arabic and become familiar with them.

In this manual, several topics are introduced where you will find some Arabic words and expressions along with their transliteration and English meaning. Some grammatical and cultural notes are also included in order to help you familiarize yourself with the language as well as the culture.

Classical Arabic is the formal language in Jordan. It is used in books, newspapers, radio and T.V. However, you should know that the normal Jordanian conversation is often quite different from the formal language. Dialects of the people you meet will vary based on ancestry and regions within Jordan. For example the word (coffee) is pronounced "gahwa" in rural areas, but in Amman it is pronounced "ahwa". These lessons will help you learn normal conversation in Jordan, rather than focusing on formalities.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jordan, you will have to adjust to some pronunciation difficulties and deal with some social attitudes and cultural norms. In this manual we have divided the lessons into basic and advanced. All are important, but if you have a limited time for study, concentrate on the basic necessities. So get ready for a new experience and challenge and welcome to Jordan...

## Basic Lessons 1 - 5:

### Lesson 1: Greetings & Personal Identification

I will read each word/ phrase twice. When I finish reading the second time I will give you some time to practice saying it after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
Peace be upon you (common greeting)	السلام عليكم	assalamu ʿalaikum
(and) Peace be upon you (reply)	(و) عليكم السلام	(wa) ʿalaikum assalam
Hello	مرحبا	marHaba
Hello (reply)	أهلين / هلا	ahlain / hala
Good morning	صباح الخير	SabaH elKhair
Good morning (reply)	صباح النور	SabaH ennoor
Good bye	مع السلامة	Maʿ asslamah
May God give you strength (M)	يعطيك العافية	YaʿTiik elʿafya
May God give you strength (F)	يعطيكى العافية	YaʿTiikii elʿafya
May God give you strength (M)(reply)	الله يعافيك	Allah yʿaafiik
May God give you strength (F)(reply)	الله يعافيكى	Allah yʿafiikii
What is your name? (male)	شو اسمك؟	shuu ismak?
What is your name? (female)	شو اسمك؟	shuu ismek?
My name is....	أنا اسمي ...	ana ismi ....
And you? (m.)	و إنت؟	u inta?
And you? (f.)	و إنت؟	u inti?

#### English

#### Transliteration

#### Arabic

(1) Listen to how two people greet each other.

A: Peace be upon you.

B: (and) Peace be upon you.

A: assalamu ʿalaikum.

B: (wa) ʿalaikum assalam

أ: السلام عليكم.

ب: (و) عليكم السلام.

I will greet you and you reply

أ: السلام عليكم.

ب: .....

Now you greet first

أ: .....  
ب: (و) عليكم السلام.

The following greeting is very common in Jordan and can be used any time during the day.

**(2) Listen to the following people greeting each other.**

A: Hello.

A: marHaba.

أ: مرحبا.

B: Hello.

B: ahlain or hala

ب: أهلين/هلا.

I will greet you first and you reply

أ: مرحبا.

ب: .....

Now, you greet first

أ: .....  
ب: أهلين/هلا.

**(3) Listen to the following morning greeting.**

A: Good morning.

A: SabaH elK~~h~~hair

أ: صباح الخير.

B: Good morning.

B: SabaH ennoor

ب: صباح النور.

I will greet you first and you reply

أ: صباح الخير.

ب: .....

Now you greet first

أ: .....  
ب: صباح النور.

**(4) Listen to how people greet, and ask and answer about their names.**

A: Hello.

A: marHaba.

أ: مرحبا.

B: Hello.

B: hala

ب: هلا.

A: What is your name? (m)

A: shuu ismak?

أ: شو إسمك؟

B: My name is Ahmad.

B: ana ismi Ahmad.

ب: أنا إسمي احمد.

Let's practice. I will initiate the conversation and you reply.

أ: مرحبا.

ب: .....

أ: شو إسمك؟

ب: .....

Now you start.

أ: .....  
ب: هلا.

أ: .....  
ب: أنا إسمي احمد.

**(5) Listen to how people greet, ask about other's names and take leave.**

A: Peace be upon you.  
B: (and) Peace be upon you.  
A: What is your name? (f)  
B: My name is Noor.  
A: Good-bye.  
B: Good- bye.

A: assalamu عalaikum.  
B: (wa) عalaikum assalam  
A: shuu ismek?  
B: ana ismi Noor.  
A: Maع asslamah.  
B: Maع asslamah.

أ: السلام عليكم.  
ب: (و) عليكم السلام.  
أ: شو إسمك؟  
ب: أنا إسمي نور.  
أ: مع السلامة.  
ب: مع السلامة.

I will start and you reply.

أ: السلام عليكم.  
ب: .....  
أ: شو إسمك؟  
ب: .....  
أ: مع السلامة.  
ب: .....

Now you start.

أ: .....  
ب: (و) عليكم السلام.  
أ: .....  
ب: أنا إسمي نور.  
أ: .....  
ب: مع السلامة.

**(6) Listen to how people greet, ask about other's names, and use a very encouraging expression to those who do good work.**

A: Good morning.  
B: Good morning.  
A: What is your name? (m)  
B: My name is Ahmad and you?  
A: My name is Noor.  
B: May God give you health (f)  
A: May God give you strength

A: SabaH elK<sup>h</sup>air  
B: SabaH ennoor  
A: shuu ismak?  
B: ana ismi Ahmad u inti?  
A: ana ismi Noor.  
B: YaعTiikii elعafya.  
A: allah yعaafiik (m reply)

أ: صباح الخير.  
ب: صباح النور.  
أ: شو إسمك؟  
ب: أنا إسمي احمد وإنت؟  
أ: أنا إسمي نور.  
ب: يعطيك العافية.  
أ: الله يعافيك.

I will initiate the conversation and you reply.

أ: صباح الخير.  
ب: .....  
أ: شو إسمك؟  
ب: .....  
أ: أنا إسمي نور.  
ب: .....  
أ: الله يعافيك

Now you start.

أ: .....  
ب: صباح النور.  
أ: .....  
ب: أنا إسمي احمد وإنت؟  
أ: .....  
ب: يعطيك العافية.  
أ: .....

## Lesson 2: Physical State

I will read each word/ phrase twice. When I finish reading the second time I will give you some time to practice saying it after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
How are you? (m.)	كيف حالك؟	kaif Halak?
How are you? (f.)	كيف حالك؟	kaif Halik?
Thank God (common reply)	الحمد لله	alHamdu lillah
OK (lit."Perfect")	تمام	tamam
Good (m.)	كويس	kwayes
Good (f.)	كويسة	kwayesa
Happy (m.)	مبسوط	mabSuuT
Happy (f.)	مبسوطة	mabSuuTa
Tired (m.)	تعبان	Taεban
Tired (f.)	تعبانة	taεbana

**(1) Listen to how these two people greet each other, and inquire about the health questions.**

A: Peace be upon you.

B: (and) Peace be upon you.

A: How are you? (m.)

B: Thank God.

A: assalamu εalaikum.

B: (wa) εalaikum assalam.

A: kaif Halak?

B: alHamdu lillah.

أ: السلام عليكم.

ب: (و) عليكم السلام.

أ: كيف حالك؟

ب: الحمد لله.

Now, we will do the same thing we did in the first lesson; I will do the (A) part of the dialog and you take the (B) part.

I will read (A) and you reply with (B) part

أ: السلام عليك

ب: .....

أ: كيف حالك؟

ب: .....

Now you start.

أ: .....

ب: (و) عليكم السلام.

أ: .....  
ب: الحمد لله.

(2) In this and the following dialogs you are given the opportunity to initiate the conversation. Listen to this dialog.

A: Hello.  
B: Hello.  
: A: How are you? (f.)  
B: OK

A: marHaba.  
B: hala.  
A: kaif Halik?  
B: tamaam.

أ: مرحبا .  
ب: هلا .  
أ: كيف حالِك؟  
ب: تمام.

You start and I reply.

أ: .....  
ب: هلا .

أ: .....  
ب: تمام.

Now my turn to start.

أ: مرحبا .

ب: .....

أ: كيف حالِك؟

ب: .....

(3) Here is another dialog about greeting, and well being.

A: Good morning.  
B: Good morning.  
A: How are you? (m.)  
B: Good (m) and you?  
A: Good (f)

A: SabaH elKhair  
B: SabaH ennoor  
A: kaif Halak?  
B: kwayes u inti?  
A: kwayesa.

أ: صباح الخير.  
ب: صباح النور.  
أ: كيف حالِك؟  
ب: كويس و إنت  
أ: كويسة.

You start and I reply.

أ: .....  
ب: صباح النور.

أ: .....  
ب: كويس و إنت؟  
أ: .....

Now my turn to start.

أ: صباح الخير.

ب: .....

أ: كيف حالك؟

ب: .....

أ: كويسة.

## **Lesson 3: Family**

**I will read each word/ phrase twice. When I finish reading the second time I will give you some time to practice saying it after me.**

<b>English</b>	<b>Arabic</b>	<b>Transliteration</b>
Family	عيلة	عaila
Father	أبو	abu
Mother	أم	umm
Brother	أخو	aKhu
Sister	أخت	oKht
Son	إبن	iben
Daughter	بنت	bent
Husband	زوج	zawj
Wife	زوجة	zawja
I have...	أنا عندي ...	ana عendi ...

**I'll will read each sentence twice and I will stop for a while after the second reading to let you say it after me.**

- |                     |                     |                   |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. I have a family. | 1. ana عendi عaila. | ١. أنا عندي عيلة. |
| 2. I have a father. | 2. ana عendi abu.   | ٢. أنا عندي أبو.  |
| 3. I have a mother. | 3. ana عendi umm.   | ٣. أنا عندي أم.   |
| 4. I have a sister. | 4. ana عendi okht.  | ٤. أنا عندي أخت.  |

## Lesson 4: Useful Expressions

I will read each word twice and I will stop for a while after the second reading to let you say it after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
Sorry (m)	آسف	aassef
Sorry (f)	أسفة	aassfah
Excuse me	عفواً	عafwan
It's OK	بسيطة	basiiTa'
No problem	مش مشكلة!	mishh mushkelah!
Would you please	لوسمحت!	law samaHt!
Thank you	شكراً	shukran!
You welcome (reply)	عفواً	عafwan
Be my guest/ Here you go (m)	تفضل	tfaDDal
Be my guest/ Here you go (f)	تفضلي	tfaDDalii
Yes	أيووا / نعم	Aywa / na'am
No	لا	la
Here	هون	haun
There	هناك	hunaak
Later on!	بعدين	ba'edain!
Never	أبداً	abadan
Now	هسا/ هلا	hassaa
It is possible / Is it possible?	ممکن	mumken
Come on!	يللا	yallah!

Ok- I agree	طَيِّب	tayyeb
Ok	ماشى	mashii
Normal	عادي	ع aadii
If God wills	إن شا الله	inshalla

## **Lesson 5: Communication Difficulties**

**I will read each phrase or sentence twice, then pause so that you can repeat after me.**

<b>English</b>	<b>Arabic</b>	<b>Transliteration</b>
I (don't) understand (m.)	أنا (مش) فاهم	ana (mish)faahem
I (don't) understand (f.)	أنا (مش) فاهمة	ana(mish) faahema
I (don't) know	أنا (ما) أعرف	ana (ma) a'raf
I (don't) like	أنا (ما) أحب	ana (ma) aHeb
I (don't) want	أنا (ما) بدي	ana (ma) beddi
Another time/ Again	كمان مرة/ مرة ثانية	Kamaan marra/ marra <u>thanya</u>
I can't speak much Arabic	انا ما أحكي عربي كثير	ana ma aHkii ع arabii k <u>thiir</u>
Slowly!	شويا شويا	<u>shwaya shwaya!</u>

## Advanced Lessons 6 - 10:

### Lesson 6: Food

I will read each word twice, and then pause so that you can repeat after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
Bread	خبز	Khubez
Cheese	جبنة	jebna
Rice	رز	ruz
Salt	ملح	mileH
Sugar	سكر	sukkar
Water	مِي	maii
Tea	شاي	<u>shaii</u>
Coffee	قهوة	gahwa
Milk	حليب	Haliib
Juice	عصير	ع aSiir
Vegetables	خضار	<u>KhuDar</u>
Fruit	فواكه	fawakeh
Breakfast	فطور	fuTuur
Lunch	غدا	<u>Gh</u> ada
Dinner	عشا	ع a <u>sh</u> a
Delicious	زاكي	zaaki
Hungry (m.)	جوعان	juع an
Hungry (f.)	جوعانة	juع aana
Thirsty (m.)	عطشان	ع aT <u>sh</u> aan
Thirsty (f.)	عطشانة	ع aT <u>sh</u> aana
Full (m.)	شبعان	<u>sh</u> abع an
Full (f.)	شبعانة	<u>sh</u> abع aana

## **Lesson 7: Directions**

I will read each word/ phrase twice, and then pause so that you can repeat after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
Where?	وين	wain ?
On (lit. "In")	في	fii
Street	شارع	<u>sh</u> areع
Peace Corps	فرق السلام	firaq assalam
Office	مكتب	maktab
Post office	مكتب بريد	maktab barid
Bus station	مجمع	mujammaع
Left	شمال / يسار	<u>sh</u> maal / yassaar
Right	يمين	yamiin
Next to	جنب	janb
Up	فوق	faug
Down	تحت	taHt
Straight	دغري	du <u>G</u> hri

## **Lesson 8: Numbers (0-10) and Money**

I will read each word/ phrase twice, and then pause so that you can repeat after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
Zero	صفر	Siffer
One	واحد	waHad
Two	اثنين	e <u>th</u> nain
Three	ثلاثة	<u>th</u> alath <u>a</u>

Four	اربعة	arbaعa
Five	خمسة	<u>K</u> hamsa
Six	ستة	sitta
Seven	سبعة	sabعa
Eight	ثمانية	<u>t</u> hmania
Nine	تسعة	tesعa
Ten	عشرة	ع <u>a</u> shara

Money	مصري	maSari
Gersh (s.)	قرش	gersh
Gersh (pi.)	قروش	gru <u>u</u> sh
Dinar	ليرة / دينار	laira / diinar
Quarter of a dinar	ربع دينار	rubeع diinar
Half a dinar	نص دينار	nuS diinar
The change	الباقي	elbagii

## Lesson 9: Question Words:

I'll read each word twice, and then pause so that you can repeat after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
What ?	شو؟	shuu?
Who ?	مين؟	miin?
When ?	متى / ايمتى؟	aimta? / mata?
How ?	كيف؟	kaif?
Where ?	وين؟	wain?
How much? How many ?	قديش؟	gaddaish?
Which ?	أي؟	ayy?
Why ?	ليش؟	Leesh ?

## Lesson 10: Time Sense

I'll read each word twice, and then pause so that you can repeat after me.

English	Arabic	Transliteration
Today	اليوم	eliaum
Yesterday	امبارح	embaareH
Tomorrow	بكرة	bukra
Early	بكير	bakkiir
Late	متأخر	mita'aKher
Morning	الصبح	eSubeH
Noon	الظهر	eDhuhor
Afternoon	العصر	El'aSer
Evening	المسا	elmasaa
Night	الليل	ellail
Week	اسبوع	usbuuع
Month	شهر	shaher
Year	سنة	sana

## Grammar Notes

(no recording available)

### Arabic Alphabet

Arabic	Sound	English equivalent	Example
ا	aa	A	jacket - apricot
ب	ba	B	book
ت	ta	T	tall
ث	<u>th</u> a	(same as "thin")	three
ج	ja	J	juice
ح	Ha	(emphatic "h" with strong expulsion of breath)	no equivalent
خ	<u>K</u> ha	(same as German "Bach")	no equivalent
د	da	D	dark
ذ	<u>The</u>	(same as "the")	this
ر	ra	R	room
ز	za	Z	zoo
س	sa	S	small
ش	<u>sh</u> a	(same as "shine")	short
ص	Sa	(emphatic "s" pronounced with the teeth slightly apart pressing the tip of the tongue against the lower teeth)	no equivalent
ض	Da	(emphatic "d" pronounced with the tongue pressing against the edge of the upper teeth with the tip protruding)	no equivalent
ط	Ta	(emphatic "t" where you should be able to bite the sides of the tongue as flat as possible)	no equivalent
ظ	<u>D</u> ha	(emphatic "Th")	no equivalent
ع	عa	(pronounced with the constriction of the larynx)	no equivalent
غ	<u>G</u> ha	(like Parisian r, sound of gargling)	no equivalent
ف	fa	F	father
ق	ga	G	goal
ك	ka	K	kind
ل	la	L	lemon
م	ma	M	month
ن	na	N	number

هـ	ha	H	happy
و	wa - u	W	way - food
ي	ya - i	Y	yard - visa

## Writing

- Arabic script is read and written from right to left.
- The shape of letters changes according to their position (at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the word).

## No equivalent letters

- Some Arabic letters have no English equivalent but can be pronounced in English: (ث, ذ, ش)
- Some letters do not exist in the English language and also have no equivalent. They need some practice to be pronounced correctly: (ح, خ, ص, ض, ط, ظ, ع, غ)

## The hamza "ء"

- It is a glottal stop that is sometimes added on long vowels and other times is by itself.  
Long vowels

Long Vowels	Pronunciation	Example
ا	aa (e.g. flag)	(delicious) zaaki - زاكى
و	uu (e.g. shoes)	(sweater) bluuza - بلوزة
ي	ii (e.g. piece)	(rent) iijar - إيجار

## Short vowels

The short vowels are certain symbols put above or below the letters and as a result change the pronunciation. Short vowels are often not written but with practice you will grasp the way to use them.

Symbol	Pronunciation	Example
.....	a very short a (e.g. animal)	(ate) akal - أكل
.....	a very short u (e.g. full)	(bear) dub - دُب
.....	a very short i (e.g. fridge)	(apricot) mishmish - مِشْمِش
.....	This symbol is added to indicate that no vowel is used.	(dog) kalb - كَلْب

.....	doubling the letter (e.g. attack)	(bathroom) Hammam - حَمَّام
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## Subject pronouns

English		Transliteration
I	أنا	ana
You (m.)	إنتَ	inta
You (f.)	إنتِ	inti
You (pl.)	إنتو	intu
He	هو	hwwa
She	هي	hyya
They	هم	humma
We	إحنا	iHna

### Verb "to be"

-The verb "to be" is not used in the present tense.

### Masculine & Feminine

- The sound "a" is added to adjectives to transfer them from masculine to feminine.

Example:

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| A - Kaif Halak? | - How are you? (speaking to a male)                   |
| B - ana kwayes. | - I am good.  |
| A - shuu malik? | - What is the matter with you? (speaking to a female) |
| B - ana mariDa. | - I am sick.  |

Nouns in Arabic are either masculine or feminine. For example, the word "kursi" (chair) is masculine but the word "Tawla" is feminine. Adjectives which describe the nouns must also "agree" with them.

## Verbs

- Verbs in Arabic change according to the pronouns preceding them.

- |          |                          |                    |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Example: | - ana <b>aktub</b> .     | - I write.         |
|          | - inta <b>tuktub</b> .   | - You write. (m.)  |
|          | - inti <b>tuktubi</b> .  | - You write. (f.)  |
|          | - intu <b>tuktubu</b> .  | - You write. (pl.) |
|          | - hwwa <b>yuktub</b> .   | - He writes.       |
|          | - hyya <b>tuktub</b> .   | - She writes.      |
|          | - humma <b>yuktubu</b> . | - They write.      |
|          | - iHna <b>nuktub</b> .   | - We write         |

## **Cultural Notes**

(no recording available)

### **Greetings**

- The greetings "marHaba" and " assalamu ḡalaikum " are very common between Jordanians; they are used all day long.
- Usually, the person who enters the room salutes the one who is already there and the other one replies back.
- Shaking hands is the common greeting way when meeting people for the first time or when they meet after a long time. In villages, shaking hands between a male and a female is usually unacceptable unless the male initiates it.

### **Visits**

- Hospitality and generosity are highly valued in Jordan. It reflects on the individual's and family's honor and respect. So, Jordanians like to socialize a lot, especially in villages, they visit each other frequently at any time without an appointment and the host has a big responsibility to show generosity to guests. So don't be surprised if your host family is inundated with visitors while you are there.
- When visiting people, it is not polite to leave immediately after having a meal. The host would never ask a guest to leave so if you feel that it is time to leave, you should come up with a good excuse like "my host family is worried about me by now" or "I have to study for tomorrow's test".

### **Names**

It is common in Jordan to call parents with: father / mother of (the name of the eldest son in the family) e.g. "Abu Husam", Husam's father, to a man whose eldest son is called Husam. His wife would be called "Umm Husam", Husam's mother.

### **Common names**

There are some very common names that Jordanians name their children by, like for boys: Mohammed, Ahmed, Ali, Omar and Abdullah. And for girls: Fatima, Nawal, Samira, Huda and Amina.

### **The Jordanian family**

- Most Jordanian families are extended and large. Jordanians generally identify themselves according to family kinship, as well as tribal affiliation.
- The bonds in the Jordanian family are very strong. Parents watch over and are involved in every aspect of their children's lives. Children show large amount of respect for parents especially the father. Children are also considered to be a sign of wealth and prosperity.

## **Respect for elders**

Traditionally, the eldest male is undisputed head of the extended family and no undertaking could be begun without his approval. Elders are also considered integral family members and sources of wisdom and spirituality. In everyday life respect toward elders is easily noticed. In fact, the word of any older person is usually unquestionably followed or at least not publicly questioned.

## **Privacy**

To Jordanians, being around people all the time, whether neighbors, relatives or friends, is very important and Jordanians find it hard to understand why someone would need some privacy and spend some time on his/her own. In fact, the term "privacy" has no equivalent meaning in Arabic; it would be regarded more as isolation or loneliness. The personal life may not be as private in Jordan as you think. So don't be disturbed if people in Jordan ask you about your weight, how much money you make or why you aren't married.

## **"alHamdulillah"**

People in Jordan usually respond to "how are you?" with "alHamdu lillah" which means "Thank God" even if they are not in a good condition or not feeling fine. It's a religious concept, which assures the idea of thanking God in any situation.

## **The traditional dish**

The traditional dish in Jordan is "Mansaf" which consists of rice, cooked yoghurt and either chicken or meat. It is usually served at big celebrations like weddings as a way of showing great respect for guests.

## **Eating**

- Eating on the floor is very normal in Jordan and eating is always with the right hand.
- Lunch is considered the main meal in Jordan. There are lots of dishes served at lunch such as "magluba" which consists of rice and vegetables with either meat or chicken. And also "warag dawali" which consists of stuffed grape leaves and stuffed zucchini.
- To Jordanians, breakfast is not an essential meal. It usually consists of white cheese, olives, eggs, oil and thyme, tomatoes and sometimes falafel, Humus or fuul on Fridays.
- Dinner is usually served late at night. It consists of the same elements as in breakfast.
- Bread is a very important element, which is served with each meal. It is never thrown away; people would have a separate bag for it when it gets hard. When someone drops a piece of bread on the floor, he/she should pick it up and kiss it then put it on his/her forehead before putting it back on the table.

## **Public transportation**

- Buses, taxis and services (a shared taxi) are the public transportation available in Jordan.

- Buses are the most used public transportation. Usually, men and women do not sit next to each other unless there is not any other place available. Old people are given seats immediately as a way of showing respect.
- In taxis, women should not sit in the front seat. They should also avoid any eye contact or any talking with the driver.
- The "service" is a shared taxi. You can share this taxi with about 4 people and the direction of it is already identified.

## **The currency**

The "diinar" is the official currency in Jordan. It is also called "laira". One "diinar" equals 100 gersh and in dollars it almost equals 1.5 US\$.

## **Bargaining**

Bargaining is common in Jordan. You can always ask "Is this the last price?" Usually, you can bargain at small boutiques for clothes or shoes and handcrafts/gifts but you never bargain at pharmacies, supermarkets and big stores.

## **Weekends**

The weekend in Jordan is on Friday and Saturday.

## **Time value**

To Jordanians, time is important but not as much as their relationship with each other. People may prefer to take time to help someone and be late for an appointment. So don't be personally offended if someone is late.

## Useful Tips

(no recording available)

- Don't worry too much about making cultural mistakes, rather enjoy learning. Jordanians are tolerant people and they will always tell you that you don't have to feel bad about it. (Still watch what other do...and follow suit if appropriate)
- Greetings are a sign of self-respect and a part of honoring your guest and host. Take time to greet everyone and ask about family.
- When you meet people, you are often invited to a person's house. Although they really want you to come over, they don't usually mean immediately and most often, it is simply a gesture of good will. You better refuse the invitation, but if they are really serious about the offer they will usually propose a date and a time.
- Make sure that your clothes are appropriate. Jordanians generally dress more formally and conservatively than Americans do.
- When doing your laundry, designate a corner of your room in which to dry underclothes because they shouldn't dry out in the open - especially women's.
- There are sometimes special slippers to be worn in the bathroom and others to be worn at home. Don't wear your shoes in the home.
- Sponges and soaps used in the bathroom shouldn't be used in the kitchen.
- When you are offered something to drink or eat by a Jordanian, it is preferred to take it with your right hand.
- When having food with your host family, watch your sitting position. For men, it is acceptable to sit the Indian style or with your legs underneath you, but women should sit with their legs pulled in to one side. Never point the soles of your feet at anyone.
- If someone asks you to critique their cooking, always give the most positive opinion. When eating, try a little bit of everything and if you try something you don't like, say you tried it, but you liked something else better.
- Your host family will appreciate knowing when you will be coming home and you should call them whenever you will be late.
- Jordanians have the habit of staring at others, especially when they are foreigners. Ignoring them is the best reaction.
- It is unacceptable for women to smoke on the streets, in the car, or in public places, especially in rural areas. However, you might see some women in Amman who smoke in cafes or restaurants.